

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,249,786 to Mahoff. Claim 16 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claim 17, that is, that each coupling half includes a bonding wire that extends around opposing transverse  
5 edges of the coupling halves so that the bonding wires are placed in contact with metallic portions of the fluid carrying conduits, each bonding wire extending perpendicular with respect to said transverse edges thus bridging a web of its corresponding coupling half thereby creating an electrical path joining the fluid carrying conduits. Among other deficiencies, Mahoff clearly fails to teach or disclose any type of coupling device wherein a bonding wire extends around the  
10 transverse edges of the coupling halves. The only type of bonding wire that is shown in Mahoff is a short section of wire (see Figure 12, bonding spring 67) that extends transversely across the web of the coupling adjacent the latch pawls (56, 58 and 60). Thus, the Mahoff reference cannot anticipate amended Claim 16, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 10-13, 17-19 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable  
15 over U.S. Patent No. 3,999,825 to Cannon in view of Mahoff. The independent claims rejected in this group are claims 10, 18, 19 and 21. As for independent Claim 10, it has been amended to further recite that each of the coupling halves further include a web section interconnecting the opposing transverse edges, and that the bonding wire also traverses across the web section. In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the Cannon reference disclosed a bonding wire that  
20 traversed not only along the transverse edges of the coupling halves, but also across the webs of the coupling halves. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of the

Cannon reference, and it is noted that in Cannon, the bonding wire only traverses along the transverse edges. There is no part of the bonding wires 42 in Cannon that extend across the web of the coupling halves. Although the Mahoff reference may show some irregular extension of a bonding wire across the web of the coupling halves, there is no teaching or suggestion to so  
5 modify either the primary or secondary reference so that there is a bonding element that traverses both across the web of its corresponding coupling half and around its transverse edges. Cannon and Mahoff would have to be so reconstructed that providing the presently claimed bonding wire arrangement is not obvious.

Independent Claim 18 has been amended to further recite that the means for creating is a  
10 unitary and continuous member. Although the Examiner rejected Claim 18 based upon the combination of Mahoff and Cannon, the Examiner did not clarify the Examiner's basis for the rejection as applied to Claim 18 that includes various means plus function limitations. In any event, as mentioned above with respect to Claim 10, the combination of Mahoff and Cannon fails to disclose the structure disclosed in the present application for creating an electrically  
15 conductive path across the coupling assembly. Furthermore, the prior art of record does not disclose a unitary and continuous member for creating the electrically conductive path in the manner as claimed.

Independent Claim 19 has been amended similar to Claim 18, that is, Claim 19 has been amended to recite that the means for creating an electrically conductive path is a unitary and  
20 continuous member. Therefore, Claim 19 should also be allowed.

*Application No. 10/347,096*

Claim 21 has been further amended to recite that the means for creating extends circumferentially around the coupling half, and transversely across the coupling half, the means for creating being a unitary and continuous member. For the same reasons as set forth above with respect to Claim 18, Claim 21 should also be allowed.

5           Claims 22-41 have been added to further claim the present invention. Claim 41 particularly addresses the structure of the spring member. It is also believed that these claims clearly distinguish over the prior art of record, and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

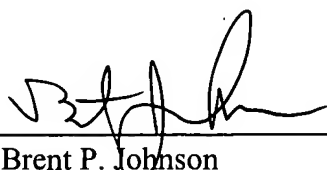
10           Claim 14 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 14 has been rewritten in independent form, and therefore should be allowed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowability of Claims 1-9 and 20.

Applicant has made a sincere effort to place this application in a condition for allowance; therefore, such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

SHERIDAN ROSS P.C.

By:   
Brent P. Johnson  
Registration No. 38,031  
1560 Broadway, Suite 1200  
Denver, Colorado 80202-5141  
(303) 863-9700

Date: 6/23/04